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II. THEORETICAL SOCIOLOGY.

The Origin of Totemism.¹—The facts in regard to totemism presented by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, in their thorough and comprehensive treatise upon the customs of the native tribes of Central Australia were at once seen to cast light upon the origin of that remarkable institution of savage society. In articles published in the "Fortnightly Review" for April and May, 1899, Mr. J. G. Frazier marshaled those facts as proof that "the totem clans are essentially bands of magicians charged with the duty of controlling and directing the various departments of nature for the good of man." He reached the conclusion that totemism is "primarily an organized and co-operative system of magic designed to secure for the members of the community, on the one hand, a plentiful supply of all the commodities of which they stand in need, and on the other hand, immunity from all the perils and dangers to which man is exposed in his struggles with nature."

This conclusion appears to have met with general acceptance, and it has not perhaps been sufficiently observed that the facts collected from the study of the Australian aborigines afford a more simplified explanation of the origin of totemism, and at the same time make plain the greatest mystery involved by it—the belief that the totem was the progenitor of the clan, and that direct ties of kinship exist between the totem and the totem clan. It may be remembered that Herbert Spencer found this a difficult problem, and in his essay upon "The Origin of Animal Worship" he argues, as the most satisfactory hypothesis, that the idea of kinship began in the use of nicknames whose metaphorical significance was gradually forgotten so that a common designation for men and brutes led eventually to the assumption of kinship between them. Thus, to use Mr. Spencer's own illustration, a warrior whose method and prowess caused him to be named "the Wolf," might leave progeny who would be known as the Children of the Wolf, or simply as Wolves, and these Wolves would from identity of name come to be regarded as akin to the brute wolves and as the fittest persons to propitiate the brute wolves and regulate the relations between the tribe and the wolves prowling around the camp. This hypothesis harmonizes with the existence of totemism as a system of co-operative magic, but it does not fit in with other facts collected by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, and those other facts remove the difficulty to meet which Mr. Spencer had recourse to the hypothesis he adopted. Mr. Spencer took as his postulate that savage ratiocination

¹ Contributed by Mr. Henry Jones Ford, of Pittsburg, Pa., December 26, 1900.

is not essentially different from ours, so that so strange a notion as belief in human descent from animals, plants or inanimate bodies had to be reconciled with the physical fact that mankind is propagated by the union of the sexes. But it appears that the native tribes of Central Australia have no notion whatever as to the connection between sexual intercourse and the birth of children, and even when the idea is suggested to them, they steadfastly reject it as absurd and incredible. They obey the mating instinct as do the brutes, and with no more appreciation of remote consequences. Conception is accounted for as being the incarnation of the totem within whose sphere of influence it is experienced. Messrs. Spencer and Gillen give some curious accounts of the precautions taken by the women to keep the totem spirit from slipping into them.

Such facts suggest a rational and intelligible explanation of the origin of totemism. Primitive man instinctively imputes personality to every manifestation of power. He refers natural phenomena to such motives and intentions as he is conscious of in his own nature. This is a phase of mental development through which childhood still passes. In portraying in verse the moods of childhood, Robert Louis Stevenson has depicted the savage attitude of thought with scientific accuracy. Take, for instance, the little poem entitled "The Wind":

"I saw the different things you did,
But always you yourself you hid;
I felt your push, I heard you call,
I could not see yourself at all.

"O you that are so strong and cold,
O blower, are you young or old?
Are you a beast of field or tree,
Or just a stronger child than me?"

Now, with such an attitude of thought, it is easy to comprehend that a squaw, tousled and upset by a gust of wind, on finding herself pregnant while the memory of the occurrence was still fresh, would lay the circumstance to the account of the wind or to any supposed personality with which the power of the wind was associated. It will be noted as the rule of totemism that its nomenclature and classifications reflect the important circumstances of the life of the tribe in their relations to external things, with such relative prominence as those circumstances possess in the social economy of the group. The ever-present necessity of subsistence will make the dominant mental prepossessions those relating to the animals and plants, or to the physical conditions on which the subsistence of the group depends,

or from which its principal dangers are experienced, and the various personality imputed to both these sets of phenomena is registered in the totem names. We must refer the origin of totemism to a period when the relations of the sexes in the savage horde were controlled solely by the sexual instincts, and when paternity, with its sense of individual motive, rights and responsibilities, was completely obscured by the primitive collectivism, antecedent to human society. When children were born, like other physical phenomena, they were imputed to the direct agency of the mysterious personalities encompassing the group, from which by force or favor the group wrung the means of subsistence. Children received totem names just as our children receive family names,—to designate their origin; and the process of reasoning in both cases is one and the same. Thus in the primordial, homogeneous social cell, the food-seeking group,—a process of differentiation began under the play of external influences, and social structure had its beginnings in totemism. The social and religious functions which totemism assumed were developments employing and elaborating the structure of totemism but not originating that structure, and those developments may be expected to vary with the accidents of existence, so that along with fundamental identity in the nature of totemism a variation in totem customs may be expected among different peoples, the extent of the variation corresponding to the diversity in the conditions of existence. The tribe, the clan, the family, and in fine, all social, religious and political institutions, may be regarded as sequences of the structural process whose initial phase was totemism. It will be found upon examination that all these developments conform in order and method to the general laws of biological developments.

Child Suicide in Prussia. ¹—In a recent number of "*Die Woche*," Dr. Eilenberg contributed an article on the subject of youthful suicides in Prussia. He confines the word "*Jugendselbstmorde*" to those under twenty years of age, and gives the following interesting statistics: The number of suicides in Prussia under twenty years of age, in 1876, was 21.2 per 100,000 persons; in 1877, 23; in 1878, 24.1; and in 1896, the last year for which the statistics are complete, the number was 32 per 100,000 persons. These facts show an increase of over 50 per cent in twenty years.

The number of suicides in Prussia in 1896 was 6,497, of which 5,073 were males and 1,424 were females. Of these there were under 10 years of age, 2; between 10 and 15 years of age, 63; between 15 and 20, 444; making the total number of suicides, under 20 years of age, 509; of whom 333 were males and 176 were females.

¹ Contributed by Mr. Frank E. Horack, Halle a/S., Germany.

The official statistics assigns the following causes for the suicides of those under twenty years of age:

1. Satiety of life in 22 cases (15 males, 7 females).
2. Bodily afflictions in 11 cases (9 males, 2 females).
3. Insanity in 60 cases (39 male, 21 females).
4. Passion in 57 cases (23 males, 34 females).
5. Vice in 12 cases (9 males, 3 females).
6. Mourning in 1 case (male).
7. Grief in 12 cases (10 males, 2 females).
8. Remorse, regret and shame in 103 cases (66 males, 37 females).
9. Anger and quarrel in 43 cases (29 males, 14 females).
10. Ulterior motives in 12 cases (10 males, 2 females).
11. Unknown in 176 cases (122 males, 54 females).

The writer concludes that two chief factors can be assumed with some certainty for the great mass of "unknown:" (1) Those who are not actually insane, but have inherited a diseased, nervous constitution; (2) The pernicious family relations, or lack of domestic relations.

To show the possible relation of modern city life to the number of suicides, Fritz Zily submits the following facts: In 1816 there were only 45 competitors to the square kilometer in the German states, while in 1895 there were 95 to the same area. In 1895, 49.2 per cent of the entire German population was living in the cities. Every eighth individual lived in a city of from 2,000 to 5,000 inhabitants; every seventh to eighth man in a city of from 5,000 to 20,000; every tenth man in a city of from 20,000 to 100,000; and every seventh to eighth individual in a city of over 100,000 inhabitants.

While these facts are not conclusive as showing that the crowding in the cities is responsible for the large number of suicides, they are at least suggestive, and worthy of further investigation.